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39. The method of claim 1 wherein:

said selecting step includes a hard mask comprised of at least one of a reactive metal and a compound of a reactive metal, and said compound comprises any compounds formed by exposing a reactive metal to ions or radicals of at least one of oxygen, nitrogen, fluorine, boride, carbon, and any combination of said gases.

40. The method of claim 1 wherein:

said selecting step includes a hard mask comprised of at least one of a reactive metal and a compound of a reactive metal; and

said selecting step includes selecting a hard mask consisting of one of titanium, aluminum, tantalum, tungsten, cobalt, molybdenum, copper, iron, nickel, and compounds of one of titanium, aluminum, tantalum, tungsten, cobalt, molybdenum, copper, iron, and nickel.

41. The method of claim 38 wherein the processing step operates at one of below atmospheric pressure , atmospheric pressure, and above atmospheric pressure.

Remarks

A certificate of mailing is affixed hereto in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.8(a).

Any additional fees due for this case can be charged toward our Deposit Account #06-1325.

Continued examination and allowance of the above case is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____


Sheldon R. Meyer
Reg. No. 27,660

FLIESLER, DUBB, MEYER & LOVEJOY LLP
Four Embarcadero Center, Suite 400
San Francisco, California 94111-4156
Telephone: (415) 362-3800